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FILE No. *NE Q 3/303/1* (Part)

TITLE: POLITICAL RELATIONS BETWEEN IRAQ AND SOVIET UNION.

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<i>D.S.</i>	<i>(4)</i>	<i>✓</i>	<i>Registry.</i>					
<i>Registry</i>		<i>2/1</i>	<i>V.D.</i>	<i>(14)</i>	<i>27/8</i>			
<i>D.S.</i>	<i>(5)+(6)</i>		<i>Registry</i>		<i>3/8</i>			
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BRITISH EMBASSY

BAGHDAD

3/13

22 May 1971

Miss V E Beckett
Near Eastern Dept
FCO

De Veronica

RECEIVED IN REGISTRY No. 10 - 1 JUN 1971 NEQ 3/303/1

Mr Guter
Copy to *PUSD - Mr Brown*
EEED
IRD *sent 1/6*
Re. D.
27/5

1. The Iraq News Agency reported on 19 May that General Hamad Shihab, (Minister of Defence and member of the Revolutionary Command Council) had accepted an official invitation from the Soviet Ministry of Defence, Marshal Grechko, to visit the Soviet Union (the latter has apparently already accepted an invitation from General Shihab to visit Iraq towards the end of this year).

Oh Dear!
2. I need hardly add any comment, since you will be well aware of Shihab's cantankerous and vain nature after his stay in the London clinic earlier this year. The medical treatment he got there appears to have been far more successful than that he received in the Soviet Union last year; and we have heard it rumoured that he may return to complete his cure before the end of this year. However that may be, the Russians have clearly devised some means of playing on his susceptibility to flattery and highly developed sense of self-importance by luring him into this exchange of visits.

Yours
Christopher

A C D S MacRae

Copied to Chancery, Moscow

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2
RECEIVED IN REGISTRY No. 10 21 JUN 1971
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TO ROUTINE FCO TEL NO 720 OF 19/6 INFO MOSCOW, CAIRO, BEIRUT, KUWAIT, AMMAN AND SAVING TO BAHRAIN RESIDENCY, ALGIERS, TRIPOLI, WASHINGTON, PARIS.

YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT A HIGH-LEVEL SOVIET POLITICAL/ECONOMIC DELEGATION IS AT PRESENT ON AN 11 DAY VISIT TO IRAQ.

2. THE DELEGATION, WHICH IS HEADED BY VLADIMIR NOVIKOV (DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER AND MEMBER OF THE CENTRAL COMMITTEE) ARRIVED ON 16 JUNE AND STARTED SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSIONS NEXT DAY IN A BLAZE OF PUBLICITY FROM THE PRESS. THE IRAQIS SEEMED DETERMINED TO ROLL OUT THEIR REDDEST OF CARPETS.

3. FROM THE TIMING OF THE VISIT AND THE COMPOSITION OF ITS MEMBERSHIP, I DEDUCE THAT THE RUSSIANS ARE HOPING TO GET THEIR CLAWS ON SOME OF THE MONEY WHICH THE RECENT IPC AGREEMENT WILL BRING TO IRAQ IN THE NEXT YEAR. THEY MAY ALSO, OF COURSE, BE DISCUSSING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF PROJECTS UNDER THEIR OWN ID 80M LOAN ANNOUNCED ON 8 APRIL.

4. OVERLAPPING THIS HIGHLY PUBLICIZED VISITATION, THERE IS ALSO A SENIOR SOVIET MILITARY DELEGATION HERE WHICH CURIOUSLY HAS RECEIVED NO MENTION AT ALL IN THE PRESS. IT INCLUDES THE SOVIET DIRECTOR OF MILITARY TRAINING, A MAJOR GENERAL, IS LED BY A MORE SENIOR OFFICER, AND IS NO DOUBT SIMILARLY INTENDING TO SECURE THE SIGNATURE OF NEW DEALS IN MILITARY EQUIPMENT AND PAYMENT FOR OLD ONES.

5. A FULL REPORT WILL FOLLOW AT THE END OF THE VISITS BY BAG.

FCO PASS TO SAVING ADDRESSEES

BALFOUR PAUL

[REPEATED AS REQUESTED]

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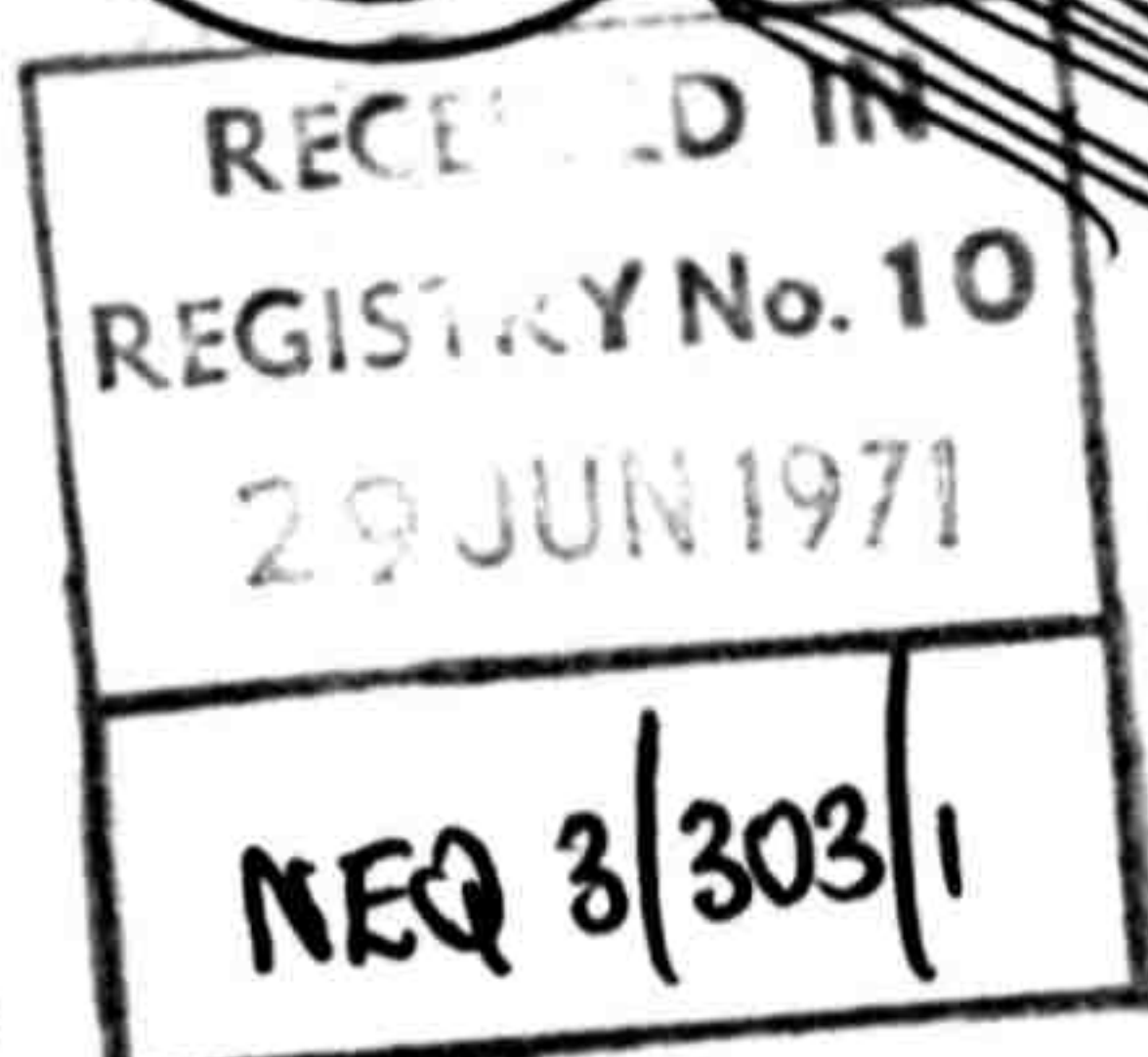
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BRITISH EMBASSY
MOSCOW

3

3/120



28 June 1971

Miss V Beckett
Near Eastern Department
Foreign & Commonwealth Office
London SW1

Mr Miss Beckett -

SOVIET/IRAQI RELATIONS

The Soviet press has, in general terms, been reporting the current visit of Mr Novikov, the Central Committee Member and Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR to Iraq. The impression created by the reporting is that the talks went well and Pravda of 25 June announced the signing of a protocol covering further Soviet/Iraqi cooperation in the exploitation of the Northern Rumailia oilfield and in the construction of a canal between Lake Tarta to the Euphrates.

2. It was interesting to see in Pravda of 24 June that a substantial part of the report was devoted to the contacts which Mr Novikov had had with Kurd leaders, in particular with Saleh Al-Yussufi. Mr Novikov had passed on the best wishes of the CPSU Central Committee, Soviet Government and Soviet people to Mustafa Barzani, and the leadership of the Kurdish Democratic Party. He was said to have expressed the satisfaction of the Soviet people at the way in which the Kurdish problem had been solved by democratic means and peace restored in Iraq. It is interesting that they should highlight their interest in the Kurdish problem yet again in this manner.

3. There is at present a delegation of Iraqi Ba'ath Party members in Moscow.

Done en -

N H Livingston
N H Livingston

*Report is expected
from Baghdad.*

pa 29/6

Copied to: Chanceries - Baghdad
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IN TELEGRAM

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BT

CONFIDENTIAL STATE 115437

SUBJ: SOVIET ACTIVITIES IN SYRIA, IRAQ AND SOUTH YEMEN

REF: TEL AVIV 3670 (NOTAL)

1. FOLLOWING INFORMATION MAY BE PASSED INFORMALLY TO FOREIGN MINISTRY OFFICIALS IN COURSE OF YOUR REGULAR CONTACTS.

2. DEPARTMENT HAS NO EVIDENCE TO INDICATE THAT FURTHER SOVIET-ARAB FRIENDSHIP TREATIES PARALLEL TO SOVIET-UAR TREATY ARE IN THE OFFING. HOWEVER, WHILE WE INCLINED BELIEVE IT UNLIKELY SOVIETS WOULD WANT TO COMMIT THEMSELVES IN LONG-TERM, FORMAL RELATIONSHIP OF THIS KIND WITH GOVERNMENTS OF QUESTIONABLE STABILITY SUCH AS SYRIA, IRAQ AND SOUTH YEMEN, FACT REMAINS SOVIETS NOW REFER TO UAR TREATY AS MODEL FOR SOCIALIST RELATIONSHIP WITH "PROGRESSIVE" STATES. ON ARAB SIDE, UAR-USSR TREATY HASLET SOME CRITICISM FROM ARAB WORLD. IT CONTRADICTS TRADITIONAL ARAB DESIRE TO AVOID OVERT ALIGNMENT WITH GREAT POWERS, AS WELL AS PENCHANT FOR PLAYING OFF ONE SIDE AGAINST THE OTHER. WE BELIEVE COUNTRIES NAMED WOULD HAVE QUALMS ABOUT COMMITTING THEMSELVES TO SUCH A RELATIONSHIP OUTSIDE ARAB SPHERE. WE WOULD NOT COMPLETELY DISCOUNT, HOWEVER, POSSIBILITY OF SOVIET "TREATIES" OR PROTOCOLS OF LESS SWEEPING NATURE THAN SOVIET-UAR TREATY WHICH MIGHT STRESS REGULAR CONSULTATIONS.

3. IN OUR OPINION, RECENT LOW-LEVEL SOVIET VISIT TO SYRIA WAS ROUTINE AND PERHAPS MADE WITH INTENT OF COMPLEMENTING AND BALANCING SOMEWHAT SOVIET RELATIONS WITH UAR. IN THE PAST, SOVIETS HAVE BEEN CAREFUL TO MAKE PERIODIC GESTURES REASSURING SYRIA OF SOVIET SUPPORT.

4. SOVIET VISIT TO IRAQ MADE BY ECONOMIC DELEGATION, IS NATURAL FOLLOW-UP TO DOLS. 222 MILLION LINE CREDIT EXTENDED BY USSR IN MARCH. AS RESULT, PROTOCOL WAS SIGNED BETWEEN IRAQI NATIONAL OIL COMPANY AND SOVIETS PROVIDING IRAQIS WITH OPERATIONAL EQUIPMENT AND MATERIEL REPORTEDLY WORTH 2 MILLION IRAQI POUNDS. VAGUE TONE OF TASS ARTICLE JUNE 24 ON BAGHDAD TALKS SUGGESTS THEY MAY NOT HAVE GONE SMOOTHLY. POSSIBLE POLITICAL ANGLE OF VISIT MAY HAVE CONNECTION WITH SOVIET CONCERN ABOUT CONTINUED HARSH SUPPRESSION OF IRAQI COMMUNISTS. ADDITIONAL SOURCE OF CONCERN FOR SOVIETS MAY BE ACTIVE CHICOM PRESENCE IN IRAQ.

5. IN SOUTH YEMEN, USG ANTICIPATES LIMIXED INCREASE IN SOVIET AID, INCLUDING MILITARY. THIS, PLUS VISITS OF RANKING SOVIET OFFICIALS TO ADEN MARKS SOVIET INTEREST THERE, BUT SOVIET PRESENCE IN PDYR LIKELY TO REMAIN SMALL. PRESENT ACCESS TO ADEN MARITIME AND AIR FACILITIES WILL PROBABLY SATISFY RUSSIANS FOR FORSEEABLE FUTURE. TREATY MIGHT BE ATTRACTIVE IF USSR DESIRES INCREASED USE OF PORT FACILITIES THERE AFTER A SUEZ REOPENING, ALTHOUGH SOVIETS WOULD HAVE TO WEIGHT ADVANTAGES AGAINST RISK OF PROVOKING HOSTILE REACTION IN ARAB WORLD.

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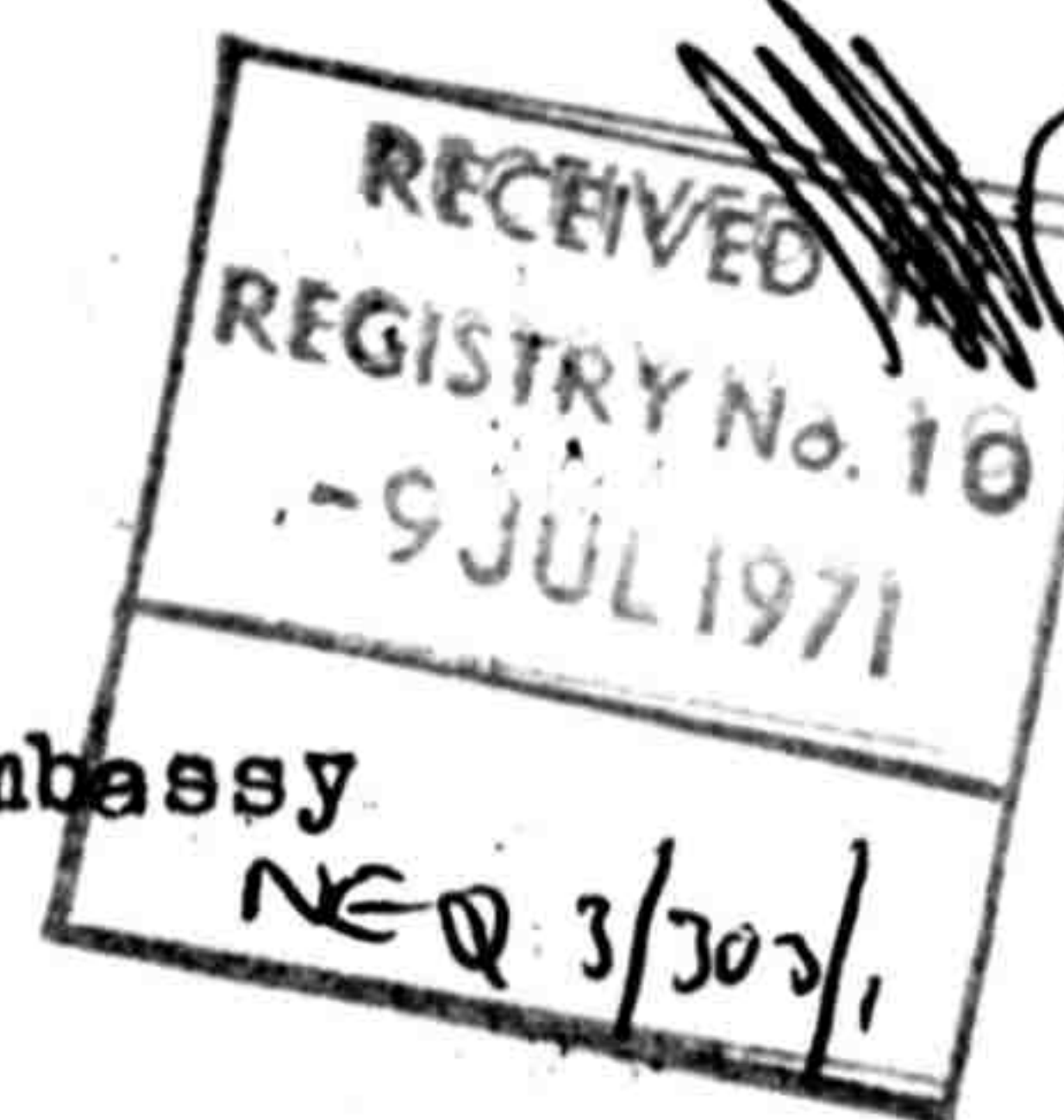
ROGERS

FROM: State
REGISTRY
RWO: 115437
JUL 1971
RECD: JUN 28 1971
10.57

Given me by the King today.

Mr. Love
Mr. Eger
Mr. Smith
R.E.
29/6
Linger.

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British Embassy

BAGHDAD

26 June 1971

3/13

R M Evans Esq
Near Eastern Department
Foreign & Commonwealth Office
LONDON SW1

Entry

R.E.

9/7

Dear Richard,

VISIT OF SOVIET DELEGATION TO IRAQ

1. In my telegram No 720 (not to all) I reported the arrival here of a high level Soviet Politico/Economic Delegation and also the presence of a quite separate Military Delegation. The former arrived on 16 June and left on 24 June; the latter arrived on 11 June, some of its numbers remaining till the main mission left.
2. I attach a list of the members of the main delegation, as published here. By local standards it was conspicuously high-powered, and the inclusion of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade and the Vice-Chairman of the State Foreign Economic Relations Committee (quite apart from Novikov himself, who is believed to have responsibilities for foreign economic relations), suggested that trade and aid were high on the agenda. Moreover Vice-President Ammash, who supervises economics and industry, was the principal host. As for political and especially inter-Party relations I understand that the inclusion of Romyantsev indicated that the Russians meant business in that field.
3. The timing of the visit was widely regarded as significant. Coming so soon after Podgorny's descent on Cairo it was believed by some local observers to herald the signature of some comparable treaty with Iraq. This (if only because of Soviet/Iranian relations) never seemed remotely probable to me; but it may be - particularly since it coincided with a similar, if slightly lower level, delegation to Syria - that the visit formed part of a generalised campaign by the Russians to tighten their hold over the revolutionary Arab states in the face of recent endeavours by the Americans to improve their own standing in the area. A contributory explanation of the timing may have been the recent signature of Iraq's agreement with the IPC, which is widely thought - by others - to represent a new infusion of British influence. A point of interest of a different kind was that the visit coincided almost exactly with the absence in China of an Iraqi Politico/Economic Delegation, led by the Minister of Oil - an initiative which the Russians must have regarded as offensively tactless.
4. The delegation's published programme was uninformative. Apart from the monotonous exchange of set speeches with Ba'ath Party leaders (of both Regional and International Commands) and

gigantic nightly banquets (to which the Diplomatic Corps were invited), the visitors were taken to Basra and North Rumaila, and were herded round tourist sights and workers' organizations in a temperature they must have found uncongenial. At what point and with whom the real business was done is matter for speculation.

5. The joint communiqué released yesterday (the day after their departure) fills the front pages. Apart from further expressions of mutual esteem and socialist solidarity, the following points seem worth noting:-

a. On current international problems the views of the parties are described as "in accord or proximate", the latter term doubtless indicating considerable disagreement.

b. The paragraph on Palestine (one of the issues, of course, on which the parties disagree) may be worth quoting in full. It reads:-

"The two sides proclaimed that durable and just peace could not be achieved in the Middle East without the liberation of all Arab territories occupied as a result of the Israeli aggression and the fulfilment of the legitimate and inalienable rights of the Arab people of Palestine. They both expressed support for the struggle of the Arab people of Palestine for recovering their legitimate and inalienable rights and viewed the Palestine Resistance Movement as an inseparable part of the Arab Liberation Movement."

The last sentence looks like a concession to the Iraqis. Certainly their editorials have picked it out for special mention.

c. Similarly there is a fairly interesting paragraph on the Gulf, which reads:-

"The two sides expressed full support to the struggle mounted by the Arab peoples in the Arab Gulf region for securing their rights to self-determination and in their struggle against imperialism for liquidating the imperialistic control and all foreign military bases."

This too may represent a slight move forward, in more senses than one, by the Russians. And the omission of any reference to the governments of the Gulf region will no doubt be noticed by them.

d. There is a conspicuous absence of any reference to the Iraqi Communist Party. The impression received is that the Russians, recognizing that the Ba'ath party is firmly in power, are resigned to cultivating it as an instrument for the promotion of their own interests, and

have set about reinforcing inter-Party relations (to which the communiqué gives ample space) accordingly.

e. In the field of industrial/financial assistance the communiqué is curiously thin, particularly in view of the composition of the Soviet Delegation. Only two projects are mentioned; and though they are given the main headlines in the press, it looks a meagre bag, whichever side one assumes to have been doing the fishing. The Tharthar Reservoir discharge project has figured in repeated Iraqi/Soviet discussions in the past and was the subject of a Letter of Intent during the negotiations for the ID 80 million loan in April. (The fact that the Russians now appear to have clinched a contract is a blow to us, since a British Consortium was in the running for the supply of several million pounds-worth of equipment.) As for the other project on which a protocol is stated to have been signed, namely assistance in raising oil production in North Rumaila to 18 MTA in an unspecified period, this is scarcely sensational since 18 MTA has been the accepted target since 1968, the Russians committed themselves to help two years ago, and the cost (which can't be enormous) can easily be covered by drawing on existing Soviet credits. It is in fact difficult to believe that no other projects were clinched or at least discussed within the framework of these unused credits. We may learn more soon.

f. President Bakr is said to have accepted an undated invitation to the USSR.

6. As for the overlapping Military Delegation, whose presence was never made public, its timing could hardly have been accidental though there is no mention of military affairs in the communiqué. It consisted of 11 representatives of the Soviet Ministry of Defence, headed by two generals. Reports on what they were up to include the collection of either complaints or debts in respect of past military supplies, and the discussion of new requirements in training and equipment. My Defence Attaché has learned that the Soviet Director of Military Training was one of the two generals; no doubt he made further attempts to erode the Iraqi Army's use of British establishments and training patterns.

7. What conclusions are we to draw from all this? My own guess is that the visitors purposes were:-

a. Flag-showing in the context of current confrontations in the Middle East generally.

b. Improving their relations with Iraq's firmly established Ba'athist régime as a stalking-horse for Soviet policies in the Gulf, patching over in the process the unsightly effects of Saddam Hussain's visit to Moscow last autumn and of unfriendly obiter dicta of Saddam's early this year.

c. The pursuit of Soviet commercial interests and the advancement of their tightening hold on Iraq in the field of industrial development (and no doubt also of military supplies).

8. What the Iraqis get out of it is less easy to assess, particularly so soon after the event. There is no evidence that it led to any substantial advance in the field of development aid. The Iraqis may have secured some sort of Soviet acquiescence in the régime's treatment of Iraqi Communists in exchange for a public refurbishing of the Soviet image as a beneficent patron. They may also hope to use this now more explicit patronage to advance their own purposes in the Gulf (the obverse of 7 b. above). But it looks to some of us as if the Iraqis kept their visitors rather more at arm's length than appearances were intended to suggest - a suspicion strengthened by the simultaneous despatch of their own delegation to China, led by a Minister whom the Russians must surely have expected to meet.

Long am
Glen

H G Balfour Paul

cc Chanceries at: MOSCOW
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KUWAIT
TEHRAN
ALGIERS
TRIPOLI
WASHINGTON
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BAHRAIN RESIDENCY

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ANNEX

PRINCIPAL MEMBERS OF THE SOVIET PARTY AND GOVERNMENTAL
DELEGATION (as shown in the Baghdad press)

V N NOVIKOV	Member of the Central Committee and Deputy Prime Minister.
A ASKAROV	Member of the Central Committee and First Secretary of the Party Committee in Alma Ata of the Soviet Republic of Kazakhystan.
R G KHACHATURIAN	Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Armenian Republic.
F D OSIPOV	Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade.
A E PETROCHEV	Vice-Chairman of the State Foreign Economic Relations Committee of the Council of Ministers.
ROMYANTSEV	Head of the Arab Division at the Department of International Relations of the Central Committee.
F A LIKHACHOV	Soviet Ambassador in Iraq.

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ANNEX

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R G KHACHATURIAN	Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Armenian Republic.
F D OSIPOV	Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade.
A E PETROCHEV	Vice-Chairman of the State Foreign Economic Relations Committee of the Council of Ministers.
ROMYANTSEV	Head of the Arab Division at the Department of International Relations of the Central Committee.
F A LIKHACHOV	Soviet Ambassador in Iraq.

Mr. Parsons.

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AS 1/7

These are two excellent letters. I am seeking comments and will reply.

British Embassy
BAGHDAD
3 July 1971

R M Evans Esq
Near Eastern Department
Foreign & Commonwealth Office
LONDON SW1

Enric

Dear Richard,

R. M. Evans

9 July 1971

THE NOVIKOV MISSION TO IRAQ


1. Since I wrote my letter 3/13 of 26 June we have had another week in which to see if any other impression cropped up. It may be worth recording one or two of the many conversations we have had on the subject.
2. Fedotov, the Soviet Minister/Counsellor, had no hesitation in declaring that the object of the mission had been purely political and that the economic aspects of the communiqué were old hat and had simply been stuffed in to give it a balanced appearance. One would naturally expect disinformation but on this occasion he may have been speaking the truth. My Finnish colleague, who makes a professional point of talking endlessly to East Europeans, insists that the principal Soviet ploy was to sell the local CP finally down the river in exchange for some more binding relationship with the Ba'ath. The French Ambassador, our local Kremlinologist, puts it this way: the Kremlin was concerned that anti-Communism in Iraq (which is tolerable) has been shading over into anti-Sovietism (which is not) - hence the mission. (The visitors, it is widely assumed, may also have demanded more progress with the Ba'ath/Kurdish entente. They were certainly at pains during their visit to demonstrate their patronage of the KDP and Fedotov has since made a point of mentioning the improvement of Arab/Kurdish relations which resulted from the visit.)
3. On the other hand, Landau, the principal West German in the German Interests Section, has reached a quite different conclusion from the one I advanced myself in my letter. His thesis is that the mission was an entirely Iraqi initiative, the Iraqis in their isolation desperately wanting to demonstrate that they too had the backing of a great power, particularly in respect of their Gulf policies; and that the Russians stood to get little or nothing out of it. Although he uses as the starting point for his speculation the insignificant fact that according to the communiqué the mission came at the invitation of the Iraqis, I feel obliged, with unaccustomed modesty, to admit that this theory is just as likely to be right as mine.

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Certainly the Iraqis are busily canvassing support against Iran's aggressive designs in the Gulf, made explicit in so untimely a manner by Hoveida just after the Russian visit here. Shaikhly's call to "sister Arab countries" (reported in my telegram No 760) to stand-up and declare their attitude to Iranian intentions of "changing the map" by force was repeated by President Bakr the following night in an address to Baghdad University ("We call upon all Arab countries and all Arab popular forces to stand united against this new catastrophe"). And the Baghdad Observer's editorial next morning extended this call to "the world's progressive States and forces" in general. (Incidentally the President in his speech described Iran's rulers as the servants of "Anglo-American imperialism" - an expression we have not heard here for months).

4. Landau may be right. But his theory hardly explains the simultaneous despatch of an Iraqi Mission to China; and for the time being I am inclined to stand by the views hazarded in my previous letter. The only point I would add is that the Russians were certainly also out to improve their standing with the Iraqi Kurds.


H G Balfour Paul

cc Chanceries at: MOSCOW
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Mr. Egerton (NED)

Minute

12/7

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15 JUL 1971

NEQ 8/302/1

NOVIKOV MISSION TO IRAQ

I agree that the letters provide an excellent report of the visit. I found of particular interest the emphasis on the development of relations between the CPSU and the Baath (Rumyantsev's presence in the delegation is indeed significant in this context); and the references to Iraq's "progressive socio-economic transformation" - a peg on which the Russians might sometime wish to hang something along the lines of Article 2 of the UAR/Soviet Treaty. The results of the visit certainly seem to promote Iraq a notch or two on the ideological ladder; but the "frankness and mutual understanding" in which the talks took place suggest sufficient disagreement on at least some of the issues discussed to keep the Iraqis still some way from the top of the class. I agree that the lack of attention paid to military affairs is surprising, though there was at least a passing reference in the communiqué where the Iraq side is said to have expressed thanks for the assistance provided inter alia in "strengthening the country's defence capacity".


B.J.P. Fall
EESD

13 July 1971

Mr Evans

1. Mr Fall's comments above are helpful.
2. As to interpretation of the Mission's significance (including its timing), I think it is still too early to come to any firm conclusions. But I would have strong reservations about the German analysis (paragraph 3 of Mr Balfour Paul's letter of 3 July). It looks to me as if the Mission was a Soviet initiative, to be seen in the context inter alia of the recent Soviet/UAR 15 year Treaty, and undertaken to put the Iraqis demonstrably on notice that, whether they like it or not, they have incurred political obligations as well as military and economic debts to the Russians, and that they are expected to make strenuous efforts to discharge these obligations (eg in their relations with the Kurds).
3. In the longer term, of course, this sort of arm-

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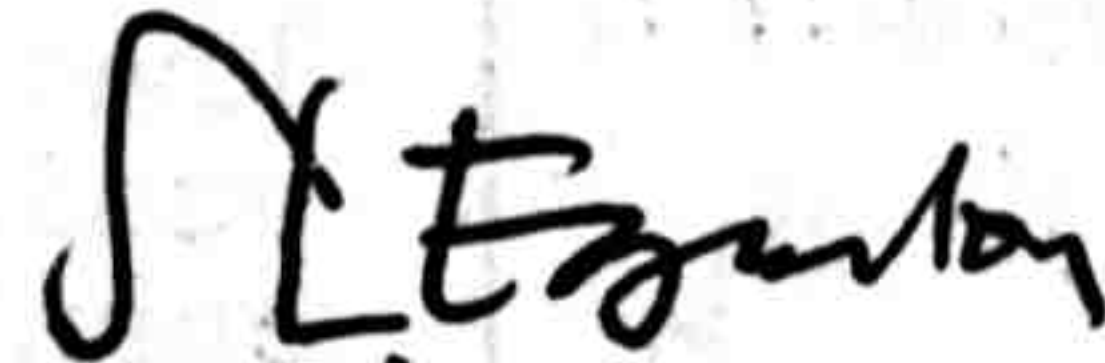
DD737719 557664 500M 2/71 GM 3643/2

As far as
the Communiqué
is concerned,

Very
damaging to
the Baath

Miss Beckett to
see O/R 12/7

twisting can only do domestic harm to the Iraqi régime, what ever its complexion, which is subjected to it. Already I am getting comments from Iraqi expatriates in London to the effect that the bite is beginning to be put seriously on the Iraqi Baath, and that their first reaction to this will be an increase of internal tension (amongst the Baathist leadership) as their debate on how to counter the growing involvement with the Russians and the East Europeans generally gathers momentum. There may be a lot of wishful thinking in this, (since the assumption is that only a row between the top Iraqi Baath can now bring about the régime's downfall); but basically the expatriates' comment has force, given the Iraqi mentality, the isolation and unpopularity of the Iraqi Baath, and the trend of events on the Palestine issue.



S L Egerton
Near Eastern Department

14 July 1971

Copies to:

Mr Smith
Mr Fall, EESD

Letter to Mr. Balgower Paul.

pub 19/7

R.E.

15/7.

Monday, June 28, 1971

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JOINT COMMUNIQUE

1

On Stay of Soviet Party and Government
Delegation in Iraqi Republic

A Soviet Party and Government delegation, headed by V.N. Novikov, Member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and Vice-Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, stayed in the Iraqi Republic on an official friendly visit from the 16th to the 24th of June, 1971, at the invitation of the leadership of the Arab Socialist Renaissance (Baath) Party and the Iraqi Government.

In time of its sojourn in the Iraqi Republic, the Soviet delegation had meetings with Ahmed Hassan el-Bakr, General Secretary of the Regional Leadership of the Baath Party, ~~President~~ of the Council of the Revolutionary Command, and President of the Iraqi Republic; Saddam Hussein, Deputy General Secretary of the Regional Leadership of the Baath Party and Vice-President of the Council of the Revolutionary Command; Saleh Mahdi Ammash, Member of the National and Regional Leaderships of the Baath Party and Vice-President of the Iraqi Republic; Shibli el-Ayssami, Deputy General Secretary of the National Leadership of the Baath Party, and Abdel Karim el-Chekhli, Member of the National and Regional Leaderships of the Baath Party and Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The Soviet delegation visited the province of Basra and acquainted itself with the progress of work at the oil-field of North Rumeila, visited the governorship of Babylon and the historical monuments there, familiarised itself with the progress of work at enterprises of the general engineering company in Iskanderia as well as with enterprises, public and cultural organisations of the country, met with representatives of the party aktiv and public, with workers, peasants and representatives of the intelligentsia, studied the activities of the Baath Party and the life of the Iraqi people, and went sightseeing in Baghdad.

Friendly talks took place in an atmosphere of frankness and mutual understanding between the Soviet Party and Government delegation, headed by V.N. Novikov, and the Iraqi Party and Government delegation, led by S.M. Ammash.

Others who took part in the talks were, from the Soviet Side: A.A. Askarov, Member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and First Secretary of the Alma-Ata Regional Committee of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan; R.G. Khachatryan, Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Armenia; N.G. Osipov, USSR Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade; A.Y. Petrushev, Vice-Chairman of the State Foreign Economic Relations Committee of the Council of Ministers of the USSR; V.P. Rumyantsev, Section Head of the International Department of the CPSU Central Committee, and V.A. Likhachov, Soviet Ambassador to the Iraqi Republic;

- 2 -

From the Iraqi Side: A.K. el-Chekhli, Member of the National and Regional Leaderships of the Baath Party and Minister of Foreign Affairs; A.Gannam, Member of the National Leadership of the Baath Party; N.Haddad, Member of the Regional Leadership of the Baath Party; T.A. el-Kerim, Member of the Regional Leadership of the Baath Party; Dr. T.I. el-Abdullah, Minister of Irrigation; K. el-Azzawi, Deputy Minister of Economics; S.Taqa, Iraqi Ambassador to the USSR; A.H. el-Jaber, Vice-President of the Iraqi National Petroleum Company; Dr. M.A.Daud, Director-General of the Political Department of the Iraqi Foreign Ministry; H.Dagestani, Director-General of the Department of Economics of the Foreign Ministry, and N.Adib, Director of the Department of Socialist Countries of the Foreign Ministry.

In time of the meetings and talks, the Soviet delegation informed the Iraqi leaders about the results of the 24th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, about the great upsurge of labour enthusiasm with which the Soviet Communists and the entire Soviet people are effecting the Congress decisions in practice.

The Iraqi Side highly appraised the decisions of the 24th CPSU Congress. It noted the great successes of the Soviet Union in the advancement of its economy, culture and science, especially in space exploration, in creating the first manned orbital space station. The Iraqi Side declared that the achievements of the Soviet Union strike joy in the hearts of all progressive mankind, facilitate the struggle of the peoples against imperialism and for peace, democracy and socialism, and accord with the interests of the national-liberation movement.

The Iraqi Side informed in detail on the measures in the sphere of progressive social-economic transformations which are being carried out in the Iraqi Republic under the guidance of the Arab Socialist Renaissance Party, on the struggle for developing the national economy and the protection of the country against the intrigues of the forces of imperialism and reaction. It described the importance of the March 1970 agreement on the peaceful democratic settlement of the Kurd problem in Iraq and its realisation.

The Soviet delegation assessed in a positive manner the anti-imperialist policy conducted by the Iraqi Republic and the Baath Party and the progressive socio-economic transformations carried out in the country, gave a high appraisal to the March agreement which is an important contribution to ensuring the national unity of the Iraqi people, of all patriotic progressive anti-imperialist forces of Iraq.

- 3 -

During the talks problems were discussed on the development of relations between the CPSU and the Iraqi Arab Socialist Renaissance Party. The Sides showed concern with the strengthening of ties between the CPSU and the Iraqi Baath Party in the interests of the common struggle against imperialism, neo-colonialism, zionism and reaction, for the national independence and the social progress of the peoples.

The Sides noted with satisfaction the successful development of friendly Soviet-Iraqi relations and the fruitful cooperation in the political, economic, cultural and other spheres and expressed mutual desire to develop and deepen wide-scale cooperation between the Soviet Union and the Iraqi Republic.

The Iraqi Side expressed its high appraisal of the great assistance rendered by the Soviet Union to Iraq in developing the economy, in strengthening the country's defence capacity, in training national personnel and in other spheres.

The heads of the delegations signed a protocol on economic and technical cooperation in the sphere of the further development of the North Rumaila oil deposit, having in mind the stepping up of oil extraction in that area to 18 million tons a year, as well as the building of the Lake Tartar--Euphrates canal.

Problems of the present-day international situation were discussed and the coincidence or proximity of the positions of the Soviet Union and the Iraqi Republic on major international problems were noted.

The Sides confirmed their resolution to continue the joint struggle for peace, the weakening of international tension, for general and complete disarmament, the banning of nuclear weapons and other types of mass destruction weapons. They confirmed the need to uphold the aims and principles of the United Nations Charter, international law, international treaties and agreements.

The Iraqi Side expressed full support for the efforts of the Soviet Union and other socialist countries aimed at convening a conference on European security.

The Sides strongly condemned the imperialist aggression of the United States against the peoples of Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia, and declared their solidarity with the peoples of Asia, Africa and Latin America fighting against imperialism, for national liberation and social progress.

- 4 -

An exchange of opinions took place on the situation in the Middle East, which continues to spell danger to universal peace on account of the Israeli imperialist aggression against the Arab peoples, which is backed by American imperialism. The Sides denounced the intrigues and manoeuvres of the US imperialist circles in that area aimed at restoring their influence, protecting their monopolies, and intensifying the positions of American imperialism in the Arab world. The Sides declared that a just and last peace cannot be achieved in the Middle East without the liberation of all the Arab territories seized as a result of the Israeli aggression, without ensuring the legal rights of the Arab people of Palestine. They regard the Palestinian resistance movement as an inalienable part of the Arab national-liberation movement.

The Iraqi Side highly assessed the all-round aid being rendered to the Arab peoples by the Soviet Union and its constant efforts aimed at supporting their struggle for peace, progress and liberation.

The Sides expressed full support for the struggle of the Arab peoples in the Persian Gulf area for the right to decide their fate by themselves, for the abolition of imperialist dominance and all foreign military bases, and against colonialism.

The Sides consider that the visit of the Soviet delegation was a fresh contribution to the further development of relations of friendship and cooperation between the Soviet Union and the Iraqi Republic, between the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and the Arab Socialist Renaissance Party of Iraq.

The head of the Soviet delegation, on behalf of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR and the Soviet Government, extended an invitation to President Ahmed Hassan el-Bakr of the Iraqi Republic to visit the Soviet Union. The invitation was accepted with gratitude. The time of the visit will be agreed upon later on.

The Soviet Party and Government delegation expressed deep gratitude to the Government of the Iraqi Republic and the leadership of the Baath Party, and to the entire Iraqi people for the warm reception and hospitality shown it in time of its stay in Iraq.

(Pravda, June 26. In full.)

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Near Eastern Department
Foreign and Commonwealth Office
London S.W.1

NEQ 3/303/1

15 July 1971

His Excellency
Mr H G Balfour Paul CMG
Baghdad

SOVIET DELEGATIONS

1. Thank you for your very interesting letters 3/13 of 26 June and 3 July about the visits to Iraq of two Soviet delegations. Your reports have been very helpful to us in our study of the recent round of Soviet visits to Arab "revolutionary" states.
2. Our general feeling is that the main Soviet object was to put the Iraqis demonstrably on notice that, whether they like it or not, they have incurred political obligations as well as military and economic debts to the Russians and that they are expected to make an effort to discharge these obligations (eg in their dealings with the Kurds).
3. Expatriate Iraqis here have commented to us that the bite is being put on the Iraqi Ba'ath and that the first reaction will be a growth of internal tension among the Ba'ath leaders as they debate Iraq's developing entanglement with the Russians and the Communists generally. Such comment is, of course, coloured by self-interest. We wonder what you think of it.
4. We should be interested in anything further you are able to pick up about the nature and outcome of the visits.

Copy to: Chancery, Moscow

R M Evans

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BRITISH EMBASSY

MOSCOW

9

3/120

Have sent a copy to Sir Peter Alexander
Miss Beckett 16 July 1971
ndal. 1826

Miss V Beckett
Near Eastern Department
Foreign & Commonwealth Office
London SW1

Draw Miss Beckett -

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SOVIET/IRAQI RELATIONS

The two anniversaries falling on 14 and 17 July, being respectively that of the 1958 July Revolution and of the advent to power of the Ba'ath Party in 1968, provoked a couple of articles in Pravda and Izvestia on 14 July.

2. The Pravda article, by R Petrov, began with a brief resume of some of the difficulties which the Iraqis had had to face in the last ten years: the imperialists and internal reaction had been reluctant to abandon their positions in the country and so, "forced to give up a policy of direct intervention and military pressure, British imperialism with the support of the United States, clung stubbornly to its positions in the country's economy, using the entire armoury of subversive activities, in order to turn to its advantage the century-old discord between the Iraqi Arabs and the Kurds, the religious differences between Sunnites and the Shiah, in order to preserve the influence of the feudal-tribal hierarchy, of the reactionary bourgeois bureaucracy, whose interests were tied to the Iraqi Petroleum Company, which was itself under the control of foreign capital." Similarly the imperialists have tried to play Baghdad off against Cairo and to drive a wedge between the various anti-imperialist forces inside Iraq. Petrov did not conceal the fact that not only in the uprising of February and March 1963, but also soon after the 1958 Revolution, as well as on a number of occasions since, the Iraqi Communist Party had suffered some severe blows. It had however survived and had also paved the way to the friendly ties between Iraq and the Soviet Union. The Iraqi Communist Party, along with other progressive organisations, was now working to remove the negative heritage of the past and to work for a better understanding between the various revolutionary factions in the Iraqi nation, in the interests of unity and solidarity.

3. Having done his duty by the Iraqi Communist Party, Petrov then went on to talk about the present Ba'ath leadership in positive and favourable terms. It had learnt from the mistakes made during its brief period in power in 1963, when anti-communism, a terror campaign against progressive forces and attempts to monopolise power contributed to their downfall. Since 1968, the Ba'ath Party had sought to work for the unity of the patriotic forces, and had released a number of communists and other "democrats". They had attempted to set up a national front which would include the Iraqi Communist Party. Petrov went on to outline some of the constructive steps towards an economic and social reform of the country, undertaken by the Ba'ath Party and, of course, the Kurdish settlement in 1970 was added to this list of achievements. There were however

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many difficulties still in the way of the revolution. There were still elements in Iraqi society who wished to hinder the path of revolution and "in the ruling Ba'ath Party itself, within influential military groups there are still to be found traces of anti-communism, of mistrust for the Iraqi Communists." On the whole however, Iraqi ruling circles were learning the importance of establishing an atmosphere of trust and cooperation with all progressive forces. It was the successful settlement of these serious internal problems which was helping Iraq to play a more constructive part in the general struggle for liquidating Israeli aggression and for securing the legitimate rights of the Palestinians.

4. Petrov referred to the recent Soviet visit to Iraq and picked out for particular attention "the establishment of links between the CPSU and the Iraqi Ba'ath Party on the common basis of the struggle against imperialism and reaction, for social progress."

5. The tone of this article, as well as of the Izvestia article which did not add anything very new, was on the whole more favourable and forthcoming than similar articles in the past. There was no attempt to hide the fact that the Iraqi Communists had had a bad time in the past, but the impression created by the article was that things were definitely improving. This article does not provide very much to act on, but it seems to suggest that there has been an improvement in Soviet/Iraqi relations since the recent visit. This would seem to support HM Ambassador in Baghdad's conclusion in para. 7 (b) of his letter of 26 June to Richard Evans. The reference to ~~inter-~~ party links is a reflection of a general tendency on the part of the Russians at the moment to formalise their ties with the party in power in the various Middle Eastern countries (of which the UAR is of course the supreme example).

Yours ever -
Nick Livingston

N H Livingston

c.c. Chancery, Baghdad

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British Embassy

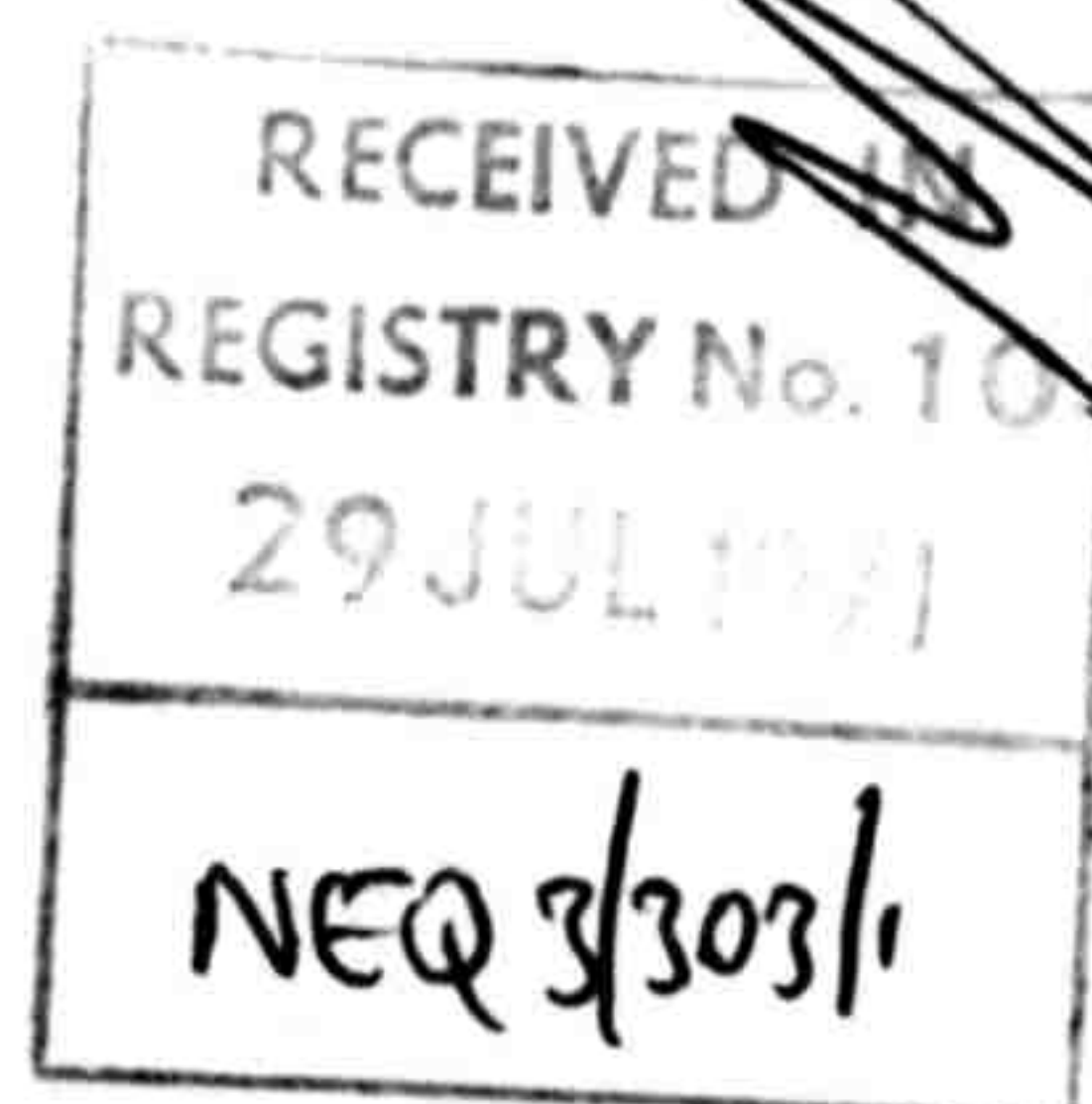
BAGHDAD

10

3/13

24 July 1971

R M Evans Esq
Near Eastern Department
F C O



Person

Dear Richard,

SOVIET DELEGATIONS

8

1. Thank you for your letter NEQ 3/303/1 of 15 July commenting on my reports about the Novikov mission and the coincidental military delegation here.

2. The only visible follow-up here has been the despatch to Moscow of a low-level return mission (in point of fact it went soon after Novikov arrived) and on 17 July of a technical delegation to pursue the Tharthar reservoir discharge project, about which the Russians seem a trifle hesitant. (They apparently have good technical reasons *not* to be over-enthusiastic.)

3. Meanwhile, nothing in our further conversations and enquiries here has persuaded me to alter the interpretation offered in my previous letters. Consequently we think your paragraph 2 presents distinctly too restricted a view. Parochial or presumptuous as this may be, we think that the Russians need a better understanding with the Ba'ath (just as the Ba'ath may need one with the Russians). Iraqi posturing on Palestine is of course of little concern to the Russians; but, amongst the considerations which surely do affect their attitudes, the Russian road to the Gulf runs through Iraq: and they seem prepared to contribute something (eg *the* bodies of Iraqi communists) for paving it.

4. As for the comments of ex-patriate Iraqis in London the latter are, as you suggest, congenitally disposed to forecast internal dissension in the régime here. The régime, for even better reasons, is determined to prevent it. This is not to suggest that all its members hold the same view of relations with Russia, and some of them may be less arrogantly confident of the régime's ability to ride the Russian bear; but until the fallacy of this latter presumption is demonstrated, I would not expect open dissension (and then it would be too later to matter).

5. You will perhaps have noted that President Bakr's 17 July statement on the imminent formation of a National Assembly made no reference to the Iraqi C.P. They may of course include a few individual communists for appearance's sake; but the intention to exclude the Party as such tends to confirm that an understanding must have been reached

See minutes

put in 1978

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with Novikov that Moscow is content to leave Baghdad to the Ba'ath.

Yours em

Glen

H G Balfour Paul

c.c. Chancery, MOSCOW

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TO PRIORITY FCC TELNO 2607 OF 2 AUGUST, INFO PRIORITY BAGHDAD.
H M AMBASSADOR AT BAGHDAD'S LETTER 3/13 OF 24 JULY TO EVANS
COMMUNIST BLOC PENETRATION OF IRAQ.

WE WOULD LIKE TO PASS THIS LETTER AND ITS EXCLOSURE TO STATE
DEPARTMENT WHO HAVE EXPRESSED INTEREST IN THIS SUBJECT.
GRATEFUL YOUR AND BAGHDAD'S APPROVAL.

MILLARD

[REPEATED AS REQUESTED]

F I L E S:

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Rephrased per 11
3/18

EESD ✓

Arabian Dept July 5/8

I should be grateful for your comments
on Mr. Balfour Paul's letter of 24 July.

Veronica Beckett

30/7

I don't think para 2 of Mr Evans' letter it was intended to be more than a general characterization; we would of course agree with Mr Balfour Paul that there were other elements as well.

2. I think that the Russians will make the best of a bad job as far as the Iraqi CP is concerned. They would probably be prepared to sacrifice Iraqi communists in order to get into the Gulf, although after the events in the Sudan they would have to realise that not too many were involved.

/H.A.L.

3/7.

/over

Confidence

The Russians appear in no hurry to "get into the Gulf". (I don't blame them, given the problems we are having in getting out).

2. An analysis of Russian policy towards the Gulf was recently completed by the TIC. Arabian Dept concerned generally with the conclusions of that paper: namely that Russian policy would remain cautious & opportunist.

3. If Iranian/Arab rivalry develops in the Gulf the Russians will be reluctant, I guess, to commit themselves to backing either side unequivocally. They will lose little by waiting patiently until the future pattern of the political forces in the Gulf begins to emerge more clearly, & I believe that they will seek to assert influence gradually, & without any startling or sudden diplomatic gestures unless an obvious opportunity for interference presents itself. I doubt if their short term policy in Iraq is much influenced by long term ^{Gulf} considerations.

§

Am Jais
5/8

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TO PRIORITY WASHINGTON TELNO 16 OF 3/8 INFO FCO.

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BALFOUR PAUL

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Paul

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13

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YOUR TELNO ⁽¹⁶⁾ 2607:

SUBJECT TO THE VIEWS OF HM AMBASSADOR AT BAGHDAD, WE HAVE NO
OBJECTION.

DOUGLAS-HOME

FILES

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SIR W LUCE

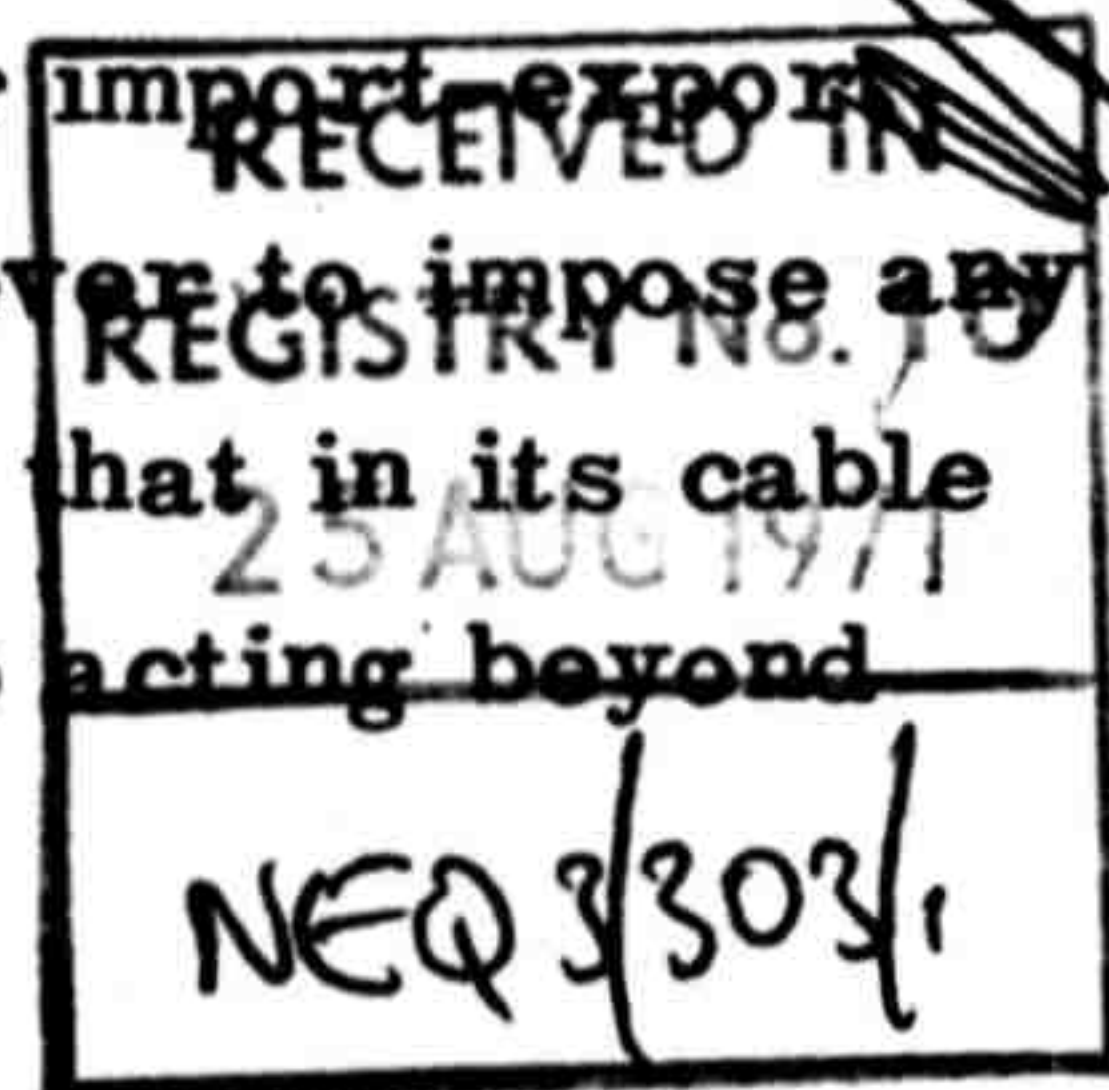
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(14)

BUSINESS AND ECONOMIC SECTION, Cont'd.

Syrian Office. Apart from the new highway fees, the union is complaining against the "unjustified" role now played by the Syrian office at the Beirut Free Zone. The union recalled that the bilateral Syrian-Iraqi accord, concluded shortly before the end of the June, 1970, strike here, had stipulated the establishment of an office at the Free Zone to regulate distribution of Iraqi-bound cargoes between Syrian and Iraqi trucks. The office was subsequently established here on behalf of the Syrian Government.

On the other hand, the union said, this office soon began to play another role, which had not been stipulated in that agreement, by imposing higher transport fees for the use of Syrian trucks. The union charged that the move was made in order to promote the use of the Syrian harbours from where the Syrian trucks offered cheaper transport to Iraq. In other words, the union added, the office was leading a latent Syrian-Lebanese competition, in trying to persuade the Iraqis to use the Syrian ports, instead of the Beirut Harbour, for their import-export activities. The union concluded that the Syrian office had no authority whatsoever to impose any conditions on the use of the Syrian trucks from the Beirut Free Zone. It said that in its cable to the Syrian Government the union stressed that the Beirut office should stop acting beyond its authority which had been defined in the 1970 Iraqi-Syrian agreement.

IRAQ RATIFIES COOPERATION ACCORD WITH USSR

Iraq

The Iraqi Government has ratified a protocol of cooperation with the Soviet Union, according to the Iraqi News Agency, INA, this week. The agency said the protocol regulated the Soviet assistance in the development of the North Rumeila oilfield, and establishment of the Al Tharthar Canal Project.

INA did not provide any details on the canal project. It said the protocol was signed between the two countries on June 23rd, this year, in Baghdad. It will be recalled that the protocol was signed, on Moscow's behalf, by the Soviet Deputy Prime Minister, Mr. Novikov, who was then visiting Baghdad at the head of a Government and Communist Party delegation (See our bulletin of June 24th).

The agency said the protocol will come into effect immediately after the exchange of ratification instruments between the two countries, which is expected shortly. Under this protocol, the Soviet oil institutions will develop the Northern Rumeila field so that crude oil production output could increase from 5 million to 18 million tons a year. Late in May, the Iraq National Oil Company (INOC) concluded two contracts with the Soviet firm, Techno-Export, for launching the second stage in the exploitation of the N. Rumeila field, and for launching work for development of the new Omar River oilfield. Work on this field is scheduled to begin early next year.

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Irak

La répression anticomuniste a creusé le fossé entre le Baas et l'opposition

Aux termes d'une convention signée le jeudi 19 août, des spécialistes soviétiques se rendront en Irak pour entreprendre les travaux de construction d'une raffinerie à Mossoul, qui pourra traiter un million et demi de tonnes de pétrole par an. Cet accord entre dans le cadre d'un protocole de coopération soviéto-irakien signé le 23 juin dernier à Bagdad, à l'issue de la visite d'une délégation officielle dirigée par M. Vladimir Novikov, vice-président du conseil et membre du comité central soviétiques. Ce protocole prévoit la fourniture à l'Irak, au cours des dix prochains mois, des équipements et appareils destinés à l'industrie pétrolière d'une valeur globale de 2 millions de dollars.

Le communiqué conjoint publié à cette occasion n'avait fourni cependant aucune précision sur les autres aspects de la visite de M. Novikov à Bagdad. On sait de source sûre que la mission de ce dernier ne se bornait pas au renforcement de l'aide économique fournie par l'U.R.S.S. à l'Irak, mais avait également pour objectif d'aplanir certains différends qui, depuis août 1970, ont provoqué, pour utiliser l'expression employée par un journaliste arabe, « la détérioration silencieuse » des rapports entre les deux pays.

Une petite phrase prononcée, après le départ de M. Novikov, par M. Saleh Mahdi Ammache, vice-président de la République, selon qui la discussion n'avait pas permis de rapprocher les points de vue « là où des divergences limitées existaient », laisse entendre que les désaccords persistent, mais ne permet pas de préciser leur étendue et leur nature.

« Un plan strictement humanitaire »

Les divergences entre Moscou et Bagdad avaient été portées sur la place publique pour la première fois en août 1970, lorsque le *Pravda* avait critiqué ouvertement « la position négative des dirigeants irakiens à l'égard de la crise du Proche-Orient », à la veille même de la visite à Moscou d'une délégation officielle présidée par M. Saddam Hussein, vice-président du Commandement national de la révolution. A l'époque, la préoccupation essentielle du Kremlin était le rejet par l'Irak du plan Rogers, qui avait reçu la caution de l'U.R.S.S. et qui avait été accepté par la Jordanie et la R.A.U.

Etant donné que les tentatives de règlement sont dans l'impasse, il est vraisemblable que le problème de la paix au Proche-Orient n'a pas été longuement examiné lors des entretiens de M. Novikov à Bagdad. En revanche, selon des informations sûres, ce dernier aurait abordé avec ses interlocuteurs « sur un plan strictement humanitaire », certains aspects de la répression en Irak. Malgré la répugnance des Soviétiques à intervenir dans les affaires intérieures des pays amis, il est probable que M. Novikov a justifié sa démarche par le fait que plusieurs des militants communistes actuellement emprisonnés sont mariés à des citoyennes soviétiques.

Les victimes des milices baasistes

ministre, et partisan de la faction syrienne du Baas, poignardé à son domicile par des « inconnus ».

Entre-temps, la campagne de liquidation physique des « espions » déclenchée en janvier 1970 par l'exécution publique de quatorze Irakiens, dont neuf Juifs, et qui devait se solder vers la fin de l'année par la mise à mort légale de près d'une centaine de personnes accusées d'avoir conspiré contre le régime, servait de prétexte à intensifier la répression contre ceux avec qui le régime avait proposé de s'allier lors de son arrivée au pouvoir en juillet 1968 (communistes, membres du mouvement socialiste arabe, du parti socialiste arabe du travail, du parti Baas lié à la direction syrienne et du parti national démocratique).

Ce sont, en définitive, les communistes, seule force réellement organisée en Irak en dehors des nationalistes kurdes et du Baas, qui semblent avoir été les principales victimes des milices baasistes, qui ont depuis reçu un statut légal sous l'appellation d'« appareil de sûreté nationale ».

Un rapport du parti communiste, rendu public en juin 1971, évalue à plusieurs dizaines le nombre des militants enlevés par les services spéciaux et torturés à mort dans les caves de la forteresse connue du peuple sous le nom de Kasr El Nihaya (le « palais de la fin »). D'autres ont été exécutés sommairement, sans même un simulacre de procès. C'est le cas de Mohamed Ahmed El Khoudhari, membre du comité régional du comité de Bagdad, et l'un des dirigeants des syndicats d'enseignants. Il avait été enlevé à son domicile, le 20 mars 1970, près d'une semaine après la conclusion de l'accord avec les Kurdes, c'est-à-dire à un moment où la tension dans le pays avait notablement baissé. Son corps fut retrouvé le lendemain criblé de dix-huit balles sur une route près de Bagdad. La presse gouvernementale rendit hommage à la mémoire du disparu, qualifié de

« militant bien connu pour son passé de patriote et de défenseur de la cause du peuple », mais aucune mesure ne semble avoir été prise depuis pour découvrir les meurtriers. Le cas de Khoudhari n'est pas unique, et le journal clandestin du parti, *Tarik El Chaab*, signalait en mai dernier la disparition d'une personnalité progressiste, Sabet Habib El Awni, enlevée dans la banlieue de Bagdad par des inconnus.

Les tortures les plus raffinées

Dans son rapport de juin 1971, le parti communiste donne une liste de quatre cent dix personnes (étudiants, intellectuels et ouvriers) qui sont passées par les sous-sol du sinistre « palais de la fin » en l'espace de trois ans. Selon ce même rapport, les tortures les plus raffinées y sont pratiquées : brûlures au fer rouge, injection d'eau dans les intestins, écrasement des membres dans des engins mécaniques, électrocution et parfois viol.

L'intensification de la répression a creusé le fossé entre le régime au pouvoir depuis trois ans à Bagdad et la gauche communiste et nationaliste. Le P.C.I., qui, au cours des deux premières années de pouvoir baasiste à Bagdad, avait accordé un appui conditionnel au nouveau régime, et appuyé « les aspects positifs des nouveaux dirigeants de l'Irak en politique intérieure et extérieure », semble avoir radicalement modifié son attitude au cours de la session du comité central qui s'est tenue en mars 1971.

La déclaration publiée à l'issue de cette réunion ne parle plus de la nécessité de « créer un front uni des forces patriotiques comprenant le parti Baas au pouvoir », mais propose comme unique solution à la crise de régime en Irak l'établissement d'un « pouvoir démocratique » dans le pays.

JEAN GUEYRAS.

source sûre que le ministre de la Défense ne se bornait pas au renforcement de l'aide économique fournie par l'U.R.S.S. à l'Irak, mais avait également pour objectif d'aplanir certains différends qui, depuis août 1970, ont provoqué, pour utiliser l'expression employée par un journaliste arabe, « la détérioration silencieuse » des rapports entre les deux pays.

Une petite phrase prononcée, après le départ de M. Nevikov, par M. Saleh Mahdi Ammache, vice-président de la République, selon qui la discussion n'avait pas permis de rapprocher les points de vue « là où des divergences limitées existaient », laisse entendre que les désaccords persistaient, mais ne permet pas de préciser leur étendue et leur nature.

« Un plan strictement humanitaire »

Les divergences entre Moscou et Bagdad avaient été portées sur la place publique pour la première fois en août 1970, lorsque la *Pravda* avait critiqué ouvertement « la position négative des dirigeants irakiens à l'égard de la crise du Proche-Orient », à la veille même de la visite à Moscou d'une délégation officielle présidée par M. Saddam Hussein, vice-président du Commandement national de la révolution. A l'époque, la préoccupation essentielle du Kremlin était le rejet par l'Irak du plan Rogers, qui avait reçu la caution de l'U.R.S.S. et qui avait été accepté par la Jordanie et la R.A.U.

Etant donné que les tentatives de règlement sont dans l'impasse, il est vraisemblable que le problème de la paix au Proche-Orient n'a pas été longuement examiné lors des entretiens de M. Novikov à Bagdad. En revanche, selon des informations sûres, ce dernier aurait abordé avec ses interlocuteurs « sur un plan strictement humanitaire », certains aspects de la répression en Irak. Malgré la répugnance des Soviétiques à intervenir dans les affaires intérieures des pays amis, il est probable que M. Novikov a justifié sa démarche par le fait que plusieurs des militants communistes actuellement emprisonnés sont mariés à des citoyennes soviétiques.

Les victimes des milices baasistes

En fait, la répression contre le parti communiste et les autres forces de l'opposition en Irak date du début même de la prise du pouvoir par le parti Baas en juillet 1968. Les dirigeants baasistes avaient assuré alors que les « fâcheux événements de 1963 » (euphémisme utilisé pour évoquer les massacres de communistes et de communistes qui suivirent le coup d'Etat baasiste du 8 février 1963) ne se renouvelerait pas. Cependant, les milices baasistes qui opéraient à l'époque, et que l'on désignait sous le vocable de « brassards verts », ne tardèrent pas à faire leur réapparition. Leur première victime fut M. Hani Nasser, qui avait été ministre des affaires étrangères dans le premier gouvernement du général Hassan El Bakr (20-31 juillet 1968). Après sa destitution, il n'avait pas ménagé ses critiques à l'égard du régime baasiste. Assassiné au début de novembre dans des conditions mystérieuses, il fut inhumé solennellement en présence de la plupart des membres du gouvernement, qui avaient été ses collègues dans le précédent cabinet. Depuis, aucune lumière n'a été faite sur les circonstances de ce meurtre, qui fut suivi en février 1969 de celui du colonel Abdel Kerim Moustafa Nasrat, ancien

principales victimes des milices baasistes, qui ont depuis reçu un statut légal sous l'appellation d'« appareil de sûreté nationale ».

Un rapport du parti communiste, rendu public en juin 1971, évalue à plusieurs dizaines le nombre des militants enlevés par les services spéciaux et torturés à mort dans les caves de la forteresse connue du peuple sous le nom de Kasr El Nihaya (le « palais de la fin »). D'autres ont été exécutés sommairement, sans même un simulacre de procès. C'est le cas de Mohamed Ahmed El Khouddari, membre du comité régional du comité de Bagdad, et l'un des dirigeants des syndicats d'enseignants. Il avait été enlevé à son domicile, le 20 mars 1970, près d'une semaine après la conclusion de l'accord avec les Kurdes, c'est-à-dire à un moment où la tension dans le pays avait notablement baissé. Son corps fut retrouvé le lendemain criblé de dix-huit balles sur une route près de Bagdad. La presse gouvernementale rendit hommage à la mémoire du disparu, qualifié de

injection d'eau dans les muscles, écrasement des membres dans des engins mécaniques, électrocution et parfois viol.

L'intensification de la répression a creusé le fossé entre le régime au pouvoir depuis trois ans à Bagdad et la gauche communiste et nationaliste. Le P.C.I., qui, au cours des deux premières années de pouvoir baasiste à Bagdad, avait accordé un appui conditionnel au nouveau régime, et appuyé « les aspects positifs des nouveaux dirigeants de l'Irak en politique intérieure et extérieure », semble avoir radicalement modifié son attitude au cours de la session du comité central qui s'est tenue en mars 1971.

La déclaration publiée à l'issue de cette réunion ne parle plus de la nécessité de « créer un front uni des forces patriotiques comprenant le parti Baas au pouvoir », mais propose comme unique solution à la crise de régime en Irak l'établissement d'un « pouvoir démocratique » dans le pays.

JEAN GUEYRAS.

Lisez
LE MONDE
diplomatique

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BRITISH EMBASSY

MOSCOW

16 September 1971

RECEIVED IN REGISTRY No. 10 21 SEP 1971 NEQ 3/303/1
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Miss Veronica Beckett
Near Eastern Department
FCO

Dear Miss Beckett -

VISIT TO MOSCOW OF IRAQI DEFENCE MINISTER

1. There have been brief reports in the press that the Iraqi Defence Minister, Lieutenant-General Hammad Shehab, who is on holiday in the Soviet Union, saw the Soviet Defence Minister, Marshal Grechko on 7 September. They were said to have had a "friendly conversation". On the same day, the Iraqi Defence Minister visited the grave of the Unknown Soldier. There have been no reports of his arrival or departure so far.

Yours ever -

Nick Livingston

N H Livingston

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Copy to:

Chancery, BAGHDAD

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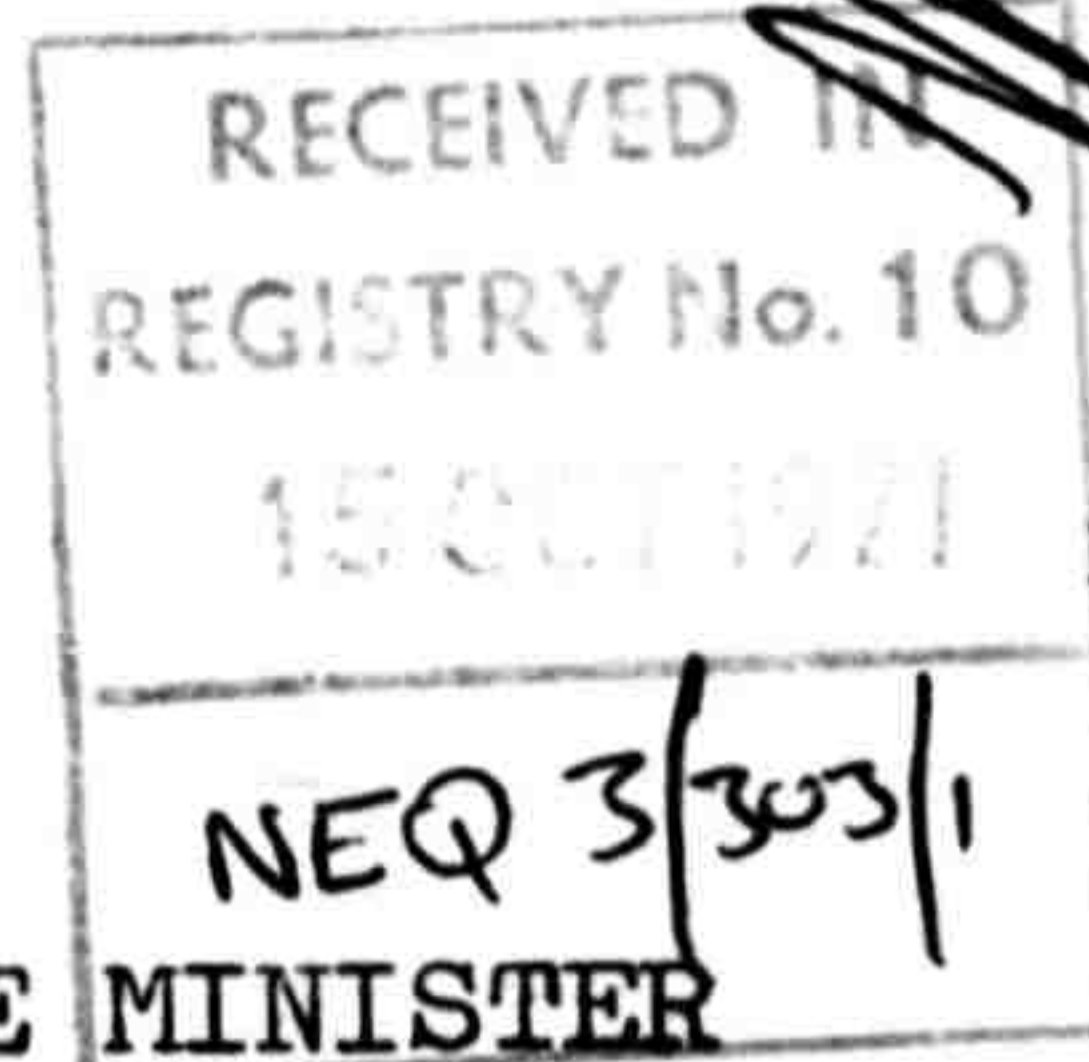
BRITISH EMBASSY
BAGHDAD

17

3/13

4 October 1971

Miss V E Beckett
Near Eastern Department
FCO



Dear Monica

VISIT TO MOSCOW OF IRAQI DEFENCE MINISTER

1. We had not hitherto considered what we know about General Shehab's visit to Moscow to be worth reporting. But since Livingston, in his letter of 16 September, has brought the matter to your notice, herewith what titbits of information we have.

2. The Iraqi News Agency bulletin for 7 September reported that the General had left for "a few days' visit" to the Soviet Union the previous night. On 10 September, which was doubtless an otherwise quiet day for news, the Baghdad Observer's main lead story was the report that after exchanging speeches, the General had presented Grechko with the Rafidain Order, Class I (Military) "in appreciation of the sincere cooperation and valuable efforts offered by the people, the army and the Communist Party of the Soviet Union to the Iraqi people and its party and army". Nothing more was heard until 29 September, when the Baghdad Observer reported that the previous day Grechko had reciprocated by awarding Shehab the Military Bravery Decoration issued on the occasion of Lenin's 100th birthday, as well as the Soviet Army Decoration. The following day Shehab met Novikov, the Soviet Deputy Premier who led the high-level delegations here in the summer. The talks were said to have been conducted "in an atmosphere of cordiality and friendship". And that, so far, is that.

*Tom on
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D I Lewty

Copied to N H Livingston Esq
British Embassy
Moscow

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BRITISH EMBASSY

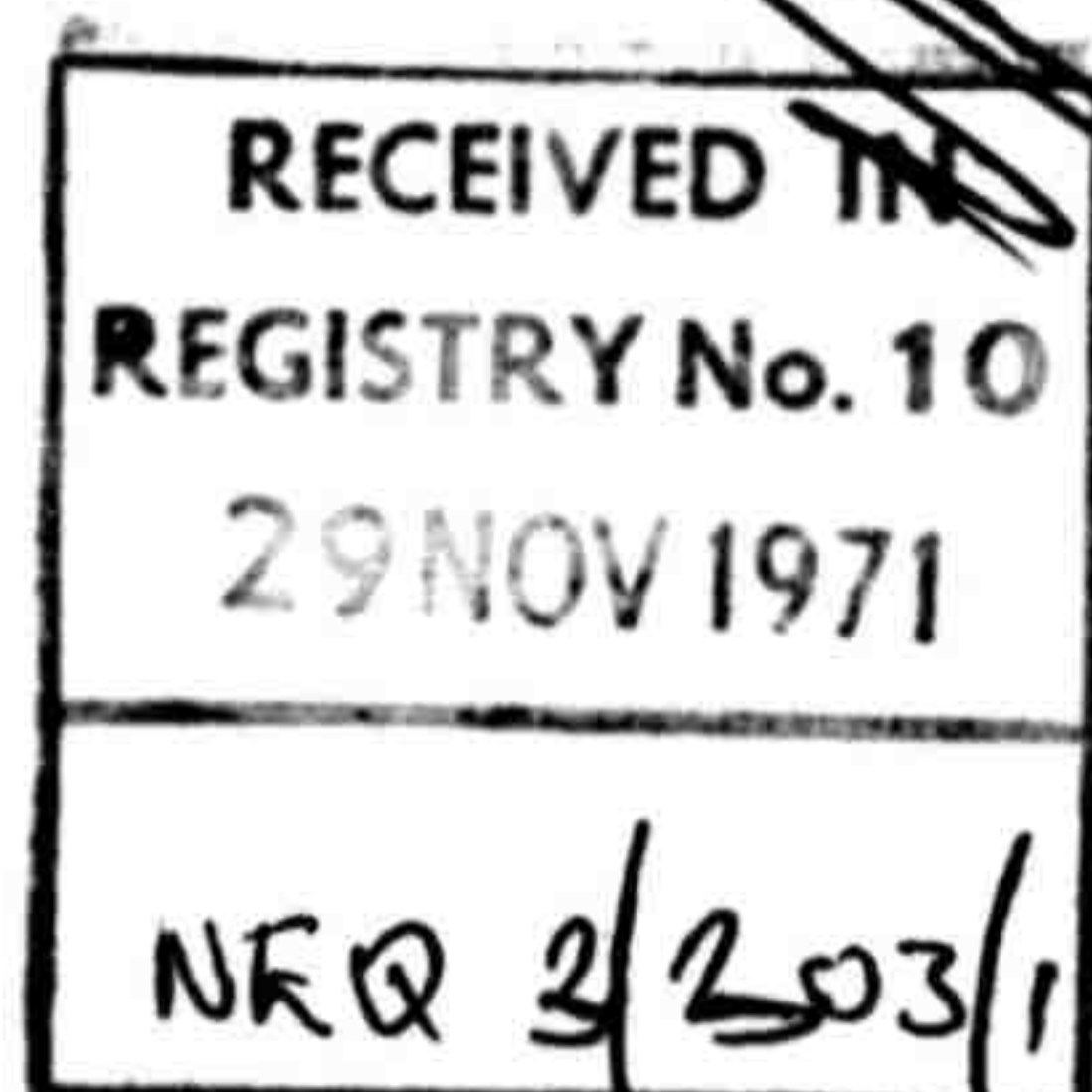
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MOSCOW

(57)
18

Miss Veronica Beckett
Near Eastern Department
Foreign and Commonwealth Office

26 November, 1971



Dear Miss Beckett,

USSR/IRAQ

The Soviet press announced the signature on 19 November in Moscow of a plan for cultural and scientific cooperation between the U.S.S.R. and Iraq for the years 1971 - 1972.

*I am ever,
Yours sincerely,
Nick Livingston*

N H Livingston

c.c.

Eastern European and Soviet Department
Chancery, Baghdad.

Mr Geyser 29/11
per 29/11

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Cutting dated 15 DEC 1971 19

16 19

Grechko arrives in Baghdad

BAGHDAD, Dec. 14.
MARSHALL Andrei Grechko, the Soviet Defence Minister, arrived here to-day for an official four-day visit, the Iraq News Agency reported.

Among those welcoming Marshal Grechko, who is here on the first leg of a tour which will also take him to Syria and Somalia, was Lieutenant-General Hammad Shehab, Iraq's Defence Minister and member of the Iraqi Revolutionary Command Council.
Reuter

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GRECHKO'S IRAQ VISIT COMMUNIQUE: MILITARY COOPERATION
AGREEMENT

(NOTE: EMBARGOED UNTIL 17.00 GMT) **(LAST PAPER)**

A JOINT IRAQI-SOVIET COMMUNIQUE ON THE VISIT TO IRAQ BY
SOVIET DEFENCE MINISTER MARSHAL GRECHKO, TRANSMITTED BY THE IRAQI
NEWS AGENCY, SAYS IN PART:-

DURING THE DISCUSSIONS (ED: WITH IRAQI LEADERS), WHICH TOOK
PLACE IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF FRIENDSHIP AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING,
VIEWS WERE EXCHANGED ON FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES, THE
STRENGTHENING AND DEVELOPING OF FUTURE MILITARY COOPERATION
BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AND OTHER MATTERS CONCERNING THE TWO
SIDES.

MF BBC MON 1218 17/12 LF

RECEIVED IN REGISTRY No. 10 20 DEC 1971 NEQ 3/303/1
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B28 COMMUNIQUE - (EMBARGOED) - 2: +CONTINUED ISRAELI
AGGRESSION CONDEMNED

THE TWO SIDES POINTED TO THE DANGER OF A CONFLAGRATION IN
THE MIDDLE EAST CAUSED BY THE CONTINUED ISRAELI AGGRESSION AGAINST
THE ARAB STATES. THE TWO SIDES ALSO POINTED OUT THAT ISRAEL
COULD NOT HAVE ADOPTED ITS AGGRESSIVE EXPANSIONIST POLICY HAD
IT NOT BEEN FOR THE CONSTANT SUPPORT GIVEN TO IT BY THE IMPERIALIST
FORCES, PARTICULARLY THE UNITED STATES.

MD BBX MON 1219 17/12 LF

B28 COMMUNIQUE (EMBARGOED) - 3: IRAQ'S GRATITUDE FOR DEFENCE
AID

THE TWO SIDES EXPRESSED THEIR SATISFACTION WITH THE FRIENDLY
RELATIONS BETWEEN THE IRAQI AND SOVIET ARMED FORCES AND ALSO THE
NEED FURTHER TO DEVELOP THESE RELATIONS IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN
IRAQ'S DEFENSIVE CAPABILITY. THE TWO SIDES REACHED AN AGREEMENT
ON FURTHER DEVELOPING MILITARY COOPERATION, THE EXCHANGE OF MILITARY
DELEGATIONS AND QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE EXPANDING OF SPORTS AND
CULTURAL RELATIONS BETWEEN THE ARMIES OF THE TWO COUNTRIES.

THE IRAQI SIDE EXPRESSED ITS GRATITUDE TO THE SOVIET
UNION FOR ITS CONTINUED SUPPORT TO THE JUST STRUGGLE BEING WAGES
BY THE ARAB PEOPLES WHO HAVE BEEN SUBJECTED TO ISRAELI AGGRESSION
AND FOR THE GREAT ASSISTANCE AND AID IT OFFERS IN ORDER TO
STRENGTHEN IRAQ'S DEFENCE CAPABILITIES.

(NOTE: 17.00 GMT EMBARGO ON ABOVE)

(LAST PAPER)

END BBC MON 1221 17/12 LF (KY)

END BBC NOV 1954 1145 GE (KX)

NOTE: 11.00 GMT EMBARCO ON ABOVE

(LAST PAPER)

STRENGTHENING DEFENCE CAPABILITIES.
AND FOR THE GREAT ASSISTANCE AND AID IT OFFERS IN ORDER TO
BY THE ARMY PEOPLE WHO HAVE BEEN SUBJECTED TO ISRAELI AGGRESSION
WHICH FOR ITS CONTINUED SUPPORT TO THE MOST STRONGEST BEING LIVES
THE ISRAELI SIDE EXPRESSED ITS GRATITUDE TO THE SOVIET

OUTSTANDING RELATIONS BETWEEN THE ARMIES OF THE TWO COUNTRIES.
DELEGATIONS AND QUESTIONS CONCERNING THE EXPANDING OF SPORTS AND
ON FURTHER DEVELOPING MILITARY COOPERATION. THE EXCHANGE OF MILITARY
ISRAELI DEFENSIVE CAPABILITY. THE TWO SIDES REACHED AN AGREEMENT
WEEK FURTHER TO DEVELOP THESE RELATIONS IN ORDER TO STRENGTHEN
RELATIONS BETWEEN THE ISRAELI AND SOVIET ARMED FORCES AND ALSO THE
THE TWO SIDES EXPRESSED THEIR SATISFACTION WITH THE FRIENDLY

BSB COMMUNIQUE (EMBARKED) - 3: 1145, 2 GRATITUDE FOR DEFENCE

END BBC NOV 1954 1145 GE

FORCES. PUBLICLY BY THE UNITED STATES.
IT HAS BEEN FOR THE CONSTANT SUPPORT GIVEN TO IT BY THE IMPERIALIST
COUNTRIES NOT HAVE ADOPTED ITS AGGRESSIVE EXPANSIONIST POLICY TOWARDS
THE ARAB STATES. THE TWO SIDES ALSO POINTED OUT THAT ISRAEL
THE MIDDLE EAST CAUSED BY THE CONTINUED ISRAELI AGGRESSION AGAINST
THE TWO SIDES POINTED TO THE DANGERS OF A CONFLICT IN THE

BSB COMMUNIQUE - (EMBARKED) - 5: AGGRESSION CONDEMNED
CONTINUED ISRAELI

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RE BBC NOV 1954

SIDES.
BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES AND OTHER MATTERS CONCERNING THE TWO
STRENGTHENING AND DEVELOPING OF MILITARY COOPERATION
AREAS WERE EXCHANGED ON FOREIGN POLITICAL ISSUES. THE
PLACE IN AN ATMOSPHERE OF FRIENDSHIP AND MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING.
DURING THE DISCUSSIONS (ED: WITH ISRAELI LEADERS) WHICH TOOK

NEWS AGENCY. STAFF IN BUREAU:-
SOVIET DEFENCE MINISTER NIKOLAI SUSHKOV, TRANSMITTED BY THE ISRAELI
A JOINT ISRAELI-SOVIET COMMUNIQUE ON THE NIGHT TO ISRAEL BY

NOTE: EMBARKED UNTIL 11.00 GMT

(LAST PAPER)

AGREEMENT
SUSHKOV'S ISRAELI NIGHT COMMUNIQUE: MILITARY COOPERATION

BBC B
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Mutual Visits By Iraqi And Soviet Delegations. Political Relations Between Iraq And USSR. 22 Mar. 1972. MS Middle East Online: Iraq, 1914-1974: Selected files from series AIR, CAB, CO, FCO, FO, PREM, T, WO, The National Archives, Kew, UK FCO 17/1534. Newspaper Cutting. The National Archives (Kew, United Kingdom). Archives Unbound, link.gale.com/apps/doc/SC5107476879/GDSC?u=webdemo&sid=bookmark-GDSC&xid=a8bd9e6c&pg=1. Accessed 11 Apr. 2022.